

## Concerts in VA hospital lobby

Music livens up the lobby of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which presents concerts in partnership with the American Federation of Musicians, Local 618, Albuquerque Musicians' Association.

The line up is:

★ **Today**, Larry Wheeler, piano, and Bernie Higgons, tenor saxophone, noon-1 p.m.

★ **Dec. 17**, Southwest Edition, accapella quartet, noon-1 p.m.

Call Public Affairs, 265-1711, ext. 2843.

## Discrimination, harassment hotline

**RANDOLPH AFB, Texas—**

The Air Force's hotline for reporting unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment remains open for business.

Officials are reminding Air Force people that the quickest method to resolve complaints is by visiting the base Military Equal Opportunity or the Equal Employment Office.

The phone numbers are 800-616-3775, DSN 665-5000, or commercial 210-565-5000 or email [contact.center@randolph.af.mil](mailto:contact.center@randolph.af.mil) or visit [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil) to send Web mail or chat live with a customer service representative.

Letters can also be sent to the MEO office at HQ AFPC/DPSFOS 550 C Street West Post K, Randolph AFB TX 78150.

Officials said they accept calls from Air Force active duty, their family members, retirees, civilian employees and cadets at Air Force commissioning sources.

Counselors take calls from 6:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mountain time. After hours voice mail takes messages. Counselors return phone calls the following duty day, officials said.

## Estate settlement

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of Maj. Steven Plumhoff, assigned to 58th Operations Group, Kirtland AFB, should contact the Summary Court Officer, Maj. Dirk Johnson, 551st Special Operations Squadron, Kirtland AFB, 853-5312, DSN 263-5312, cell 505-301-5437.



Lt. Col. Joseph A. Schurhammer



Lt. Col. Endel A. Sorra

## Medical officers receive Bronze Stars

Lt. Col. Joseph A. Schurhammer and Lt. Col. Endel A. Sorra, both of the 377th Medical Group, were awarded Bronze Star Medals for their service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Schurhammer's medal was presented for meritorious achievement while serving as the deputy commander of the 410th Expeditionary Medical Group and as the commander of the 410th Expeditionary Aerospace

Medicine Squadron, 410th Expeditionary Wing, while engaged in ground operations against the enemy at a classified location January-May 2003.

Sorra, also serving at the classified location January-May 2003, received the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious achievement for his service in the 410th Medical Operations Squadron, 410th Expeditionary Medical Group, 410th Expeditionary Wing.

## Tax statements available on myPay

**ARLINGTON, Va. (AFPN)—**Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials have compiled a schedule of dates when servicemembers, military retirees and annuitants and defense civilian employees can access their tax statements through myPay.

Military members and DOD civilian employees will have access to view, save and print their tax statements from myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

For assistance, users can call myPay customer support at 800-390-2348.

MyPay provides a secure method for users to manage their pay account information, officials said. Available around the clock, customers can make changes online, instead of visiting a finance office.

Officials are projecting the tax statements will be posted on myPay during the following periods.

★ **Military annuitants:** Dec. 13 to 18

★ **DOD civilians:** Dec. 24 to 29

★ **Army, Air Force and Navy reserve components:** Dec. 26 to Jan. 1

★ **Military retirees:** Jan. 1 to 5

★ **Marine Corps active duty and Reserve:** Jan. 13 to 21

★ **Army, Air Force and Navy active duty:** Jan. 16 to 26

Pat Shine, director of DFAS' military and civilian pay services business line, said, "Timely access to W-2s and other tax statements is another way myPay gives users control of their pay information."



Jim Stockton

## Contracting's Stockton retires

Jim Stockton, secretary to the 377th Contracting Squadron commander, retires today after working in federal service since 1984. After enlisting in the Air Force in Paris, Texas, Stockton served in the military August 1957-February 1983.

His civil service background includes working in protocol with the Air Force Contract Management Division here, December 1984-October 1990, at the Kirtland Contracting Center, which is the 377th Contracting Squadron now, October 1990-December 2003.

Stockton said, "I have worked with some outstanding people. Thanks for all the help I've received from the fine TEAM KIRTLAND members during my time here."

The Talco, Texas, native said he plans to remain in Albuquerque after retiring.

## Airman's Council begins

The bylaws are written and ratified and the first meeting for the Kirtland Airman's Council is Dec. 17.

Senior airmen and below assigned to Kirtland AFB can join this council that aims to support their morale.

Call Staff Sgt. Latina Armstrong at 846-2807 or Senior Airman Dionne L. Morris at 853-6612.

# Engineer receives annual Lockheed-Martin sponsored award

BY JOHN BROWNLEE

Air Force Research Laboratory  
Space Vehicles Directorate  
Public Affairs

When we were kids, many of us were clueless (and some still are) about what we wanted to be when we grew up. But Kathryn Parker knew.

As a little girl growing up in Oakland, Calif., she first thought that she wanted to be a writer. But all that changed when NASA showed up one morning at her seventh-grade classroom with a blowtorch.

"They brought some of those tiles that protect the Space Shuttle during re-entry and let me hold one while they put the flame to it. I thought it was pretty cool (literally) when I couldn't feel any heat come through the ceramic material and it didn't burn my hand," she remembered.

That was also the day she knew that the Pulitzer Prize for Literature would just have to wait—she was first

going to be an aerospace engineer.

And so far, she's done pretty well. The former seventh-grader is now a 25-year-old first lieutenant currently specializing in spacecraft power and attitude control systems at the Air Force Research Laboratory's Space Vehicles Directorate. And for that work she has just learned that she will receive the Lockheed-Martin-sponsored 2004 Black Engineer of the Year Modern Day Technology Certificate at a conference in Baltimore, Md., this coming February.

But it hasn't been an effortless trip for this young engineer, now just a few short years out of college.

"When I was in high school, people tried to dissuade me from this career by saying it was the last place I should go," she said. "I was told that engineering was predominately a field for men, and that a black female would be fighting an uphill battle."

But at Parker's *alma mater*, Embry-



1st Lt. Kathryn Parker

Riddle Aeronautical University, in Prescott, Ariz., to which she had earned a four-year ROTC scholarship as an aerospace engineering major, she learned as the only black female there that she could more than compete and that personal determination counted for a lot in life. Although a couple of other black females came and left, Kathryn Parker would be the only one of them to graduate in her class.

"I didn't listen to any of the negative stuff—I just did the work," said Parker. Good advice for all of us.

A single mother of a five-year-old son, Christian, Parker looks forward to a full and rewarding Air Force career.

"I joined the service because I wanted to serve my country, but as a parent, I also required the kind of flexibility the Air Force offered when it came to pursuing a career while raising my son," she explained. "I'm very fortunate to be able to do both!"

# DOD targets military pay increases for 2004

WASHINGTON—Military members will see their basic pay more in line with that of civilian counterparts in the private sector in 2004 thanks to an increased pay and benefits compensation package included in the 2004 Defense Authorization Act approved by Congress this year.

Col. Virginia S. Penrod, director of military compensation office for DOD, said the 2004 military pay and benefits plan provides for a 3.7 percent across the board pay increase and further targets pay increases for noncommissioned officers and warrant officers, some as high as 6.25 percent for senior-enlisted service members.

In addition, service members will see 2004 increases in housing allowance pay and special incentive pay.

Penrod said the average basic pay raise, which is equal to a little over 4 percent, helps to close the gap between military pay and civilian pay.

"Everyone receives a 3.7 percent pay raise across the board, this is by law," she said, adding that the pay raise is a half percentage point more than the private sector wage earner will earn. "The NCOs, E-5 through E-9 will receive targeted pay raises from 4.6 to 6.25 percent. And we're also paying a targeted raise to our warrant officer grades."

Penrod also noted that part of the pay incentive is to help in retention of senior non commissioned officers, pointing out that highest pay raises, 6.25 percent, will go to E-9s with 26 years or more service.

"This (raise) recognizes the contribution of our senior non commissioned officers and our career enlisted force," Penrod explained. "All NCOs will receive some form of a targeted raise, and the pay increases as the grade increases. So it's an incentive to continue in the military and to pursue higher rank."

Also included in the package is an

average increase of almost 8 percent for military basic allowance for housing—money given to military personnel to help defray the cost of housing expenses.

Penrod said the almost 8 percent increase for housing allowance continues our effort to reduce out of pocket expenses for military personnel, which the Pentagon is hopeful to do by fiscal year 2005.

"When basic allowance for housing was enacted, housing allowances amounted to 80 percent of housing costs, this left the service member with 20 percent out-of-pocket cost," she said. "In fiscal year 2000, the secretary of Defense committed the department to reduce these out of pocket expenses to zero by 2005. And we're on track to do this."

She said that military out of pocket expenses for housing is down to about 3.5 percent for January 2004 and "should be at zero in 2005."

Other new measures in the 2004 compensation package allow for ser-

vices to offer incentive pay to get officers to extend overseas tours.

Penrod said the compensation policy has two principal thrusts: The first of which is to have an overall level of military compensation that is at least equal to the 70th percentile of the pay of civilians with comparable levels of education. The other is to target special and incentive pays and bonuses to address retention problems that are specific to various occupations and recruitment problems.

Penrod said DOD is targeting pay raises for its noncommissioned officers to "recognize the contributions" that noncommissioned officers and career-enlisted force bring to the military.

In summing up the new compensation package, she said that DOD remains committed to preserving a compensation and benefit structure that provides members with a suitable and secure standard of living.